Return of Proposal Req. - 2-11-64
#8

DEAR PHIL:

8 February 1964

CONCERNING YOUR MORE-THAN-GENEROUS OFFER TO ALLOW ME TO HAVE A COPY OF ROSE FOR ONLY $50, WITH MY FULL UNDERSTANDING OF THE MARVELOUS FRINGE BENIFITS THAT INCLUDE EVERYTHING BUT S+H GREEN STAMPS, I HAVE THREE LITTLE WORDS FOR YOU: GO TO HELL. (I LIKE YOUR POEM BECAUSE IT SHOWS THAT SOMEWHERE WITHIN YOU THERE IS A STREAK OF OPEN-HANDED HONESTY; AND IT PROMISES THAT YOU ARE, OR WERE, INTERESTED IN BECOMING A POET -- INSTEAD OF FOREVER REMAINING A TALENTED WITCH DOCTOR OF THE ARTSY-CRAFTSY, [redacted] TUESDAY AFTERNOON SET. I AM NOT, HOWEVER, THE CURATOR OF A LITERARY MUSEUM. NOR AM I A PATRON OF THE ARTS. SO SKIP IT.)

CONCERNING MOONLIGHT, LET US HAVE SOME VERBAL WARFARE ON THE SUBJECT. I'M INTERESTED IN SEEING WHAT POSSIBLE RATIONALE ONE COULD GIVE FOR PRINTED DEFICATION, IF THAT DOES NOT DIGNIFY THE PATCHEN CONCEPT TOO MUCH. CAUTION: AMUSEMENT, PRETENDED OR GENUINE, DOES NOT REFUTE AN EVALUATION -- IT EVADES IT.

I'LL KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR BEUM'S COLLECTION. TELL HIM HE WON'T HAVE TO SIGN IT, AS I AM INTERESTED IN POETRY, NOT AUTOGRAPHS. THANK YOU FOR THE INFORMATION, THOUGH.

I NEVER NOTICED THE "RESEMBLANCE" BETWEEN WYETH AND WYATT. BESIDES, TO PUSH THE WHOLE THING A BIT FURTHER, IT'S WYATT OIL -- BUT WYETH USES TEMPRA. FANTASTIC MEN, THOUGH -- BOTH OF THEM. I'M GLAD YOU TOO WERE STRUCK BY HIS MOVEMENT AND IMAGINATION.

CONCERNING THE 100, MINUS 9 NOW, POEMS -- WHETHER OR NOT I'LL EVER GET AROUND TO IT,

AND HOW SOON, I DON'T KNOW. AS FOR PUBLICATION OF THEM INDIVIDUALLY, IT STANDS: 3 POEMS, $30, LEATHERNECK. SOME OF THE OTHERS, I'VE ATTEMPTED TO SELL TO THOSE WILLING TO PAY AT LEAST 50¢ A LINE, AS ALWAYS, WITH NICELY PRINTED REJECTION SLIPS IN REPLY. SO, FOR THE PAST YEAR, I'VE CONCENTRATED ON WORDS STRUNG TOGETHER IN A MORE MARKETABLE FASHION: NOVELS. I'VE TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF BOTH THE IDLE WARRIORS AND LAZY GUITAR AS MEANS OF BACKGROUNDING POEMS, THOUGH -- ON TITLE PAGES, AS WORKS OF CHARACTERS, AND -- IN LG -- AS FOLKSONGS. LAZY GUITAR IS A BOOK ABOUT THE TRAVELS AND ADVENTURES OF DAVEY CLINTON, THE HOWARD ROARK OF FOLK SINGING. AT PRESENT IT'S 1/4 FINISHED, WITH ABOUT FIVE POEMS: OUTSET, LAZY GUITAR, AND SOME THAT I'VE WRITTEN SINCE WE LAST MET.

I HAD A BIT OF LUCK WITH THE IDLE WARRIORS, WHICH I NOW REWRITE, AS IT WAS BASED ON A MARINE CORPS BUDDY OF MINE WHO REALLY HAPPENS TO HAVE BEEN LEE HARVEY OSWALD. OR DID I TELL YOU? ANYWAY, THEN AND NOW, IT'S ABOUT A MARINE WHO BECOMES DISILLUSIONED AND GOES TO RUSSIA. TOM SANCTON SENT THE FINAL CHAPTER OF THE OLD DRAFT TO HIS PUBLISHER WITH A COVERING LETTER. SO FAR NO WORD. MEANWHILE, I'M REDOING IT WITH MORE UNITY AND MORE PHILISOPHICAL-POLITICAL-CULTURAL DAMNATION.

THE WHOLE THING WAS VERY INTERESTING FOR AWHILE, THE ASSASSINATION, BECAUSE -- ON THE

SURFACE -- THERE WAS GOOD REASON FOR THE UNENLIGHTENED SS AND FBI TO SUSPECT I MIGHT'VE HAD A HAND IN IT. WE HAD SOME POLITE CONVERSATIONS AND FINALLY, I GUESS, I WAS CLEARED. NO WORD FROM THEM LATELY. I HOPE, THOUGH, MY MOVE TO THIS AREA SCARED THE PISS OUT OF 'EM. WHETHER OR NOT I'LL BE ASKED TO PUT MY 2¢ IN AT THE WARREN HEARING, I DON'T KNOW. OR CARE. WHEN IT IS ALL OVER, THOUGH, I MAY YET GO PISS ON JFK'S GRAVE, RIP.

CHECK THE NEXT SAT. EVE. POST, IF YOU'RE INTERESTED, I GOT A NOTE FROM THEM THAT MY LETTER TO THE EDITORS -- A SARCASTIC COMMENT ON ARTHUR MILLER'S NEW PLAY -- "IS TABBED FOR POSSIBLE PUBLICATION." BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, BY THE WAY, WOULD WRETCH IF HE SAW WHAT THOSE BASTARDS PUBLISH IN HIS MAGAZINE.

NOTHING ELSE SPECIAL AT THIS ZIP CODE LOCATION, EXCEPT NOBODY WILL TELL ME MY NUMBER, AND EXCEPTING A LETTER FROM NEW YORK -- FROM JESSICA -- ASKING ME TO COME AND LIVE WITH HER, BUT PROPOSING THAT WE NOT HAVE SEXUAL RELATIONS. MY REPLY WAS ONLY SLIGHTLY MORE CUTTING THAN MY USUAL NASTY REMARKS (SUCH AS APPEAR HERE AND ELSEWHERE). SO DON'T BE CROSSED. HO HE HA HO!

AND WRITE, GIVING ME HELL, SOON.

TAKE OVER. IT'S YOURS.

Kerry